

Poem

THE TORONTO DOGS

They looked at him with their soft eyes,
Only one question there.
One after the next they died, complaining not,
Their lives the paving stones of a long road
Whose end was only a dream in doctors' minds.
The road had started early, as all roads do,
The threshold an old cage in von Minkovski's lab
Where a lab boy, obscure to all,
Obscure as all those nameless dogs,
Had found a swarm of flies in the dry urine,
Sweet to taste if not to limbs.

In the hospitals and beds around the world
Young children died unconscious,
Their sugared blood unburned,
Their limbs tabetic and their eyes all spent in
hope.

The furry friends in metal cages
Lay in softness unprotesting
And told those Torontonians under shadows of the
night
"Go on, don't mind us, we're trying too!"

One day at last, as if a miracle of sheer
persistence
Performed before those altars with no church,
The quiet juices coming of the entrails of those
quiet dogs,
Like tears of angels became crystals in a tube,
And children the world over
Lived to tell their children
Of the dreams they dreamt
And at the end of that old road
So paved with silent dolor
A spark of dogness lit the skies of God.

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